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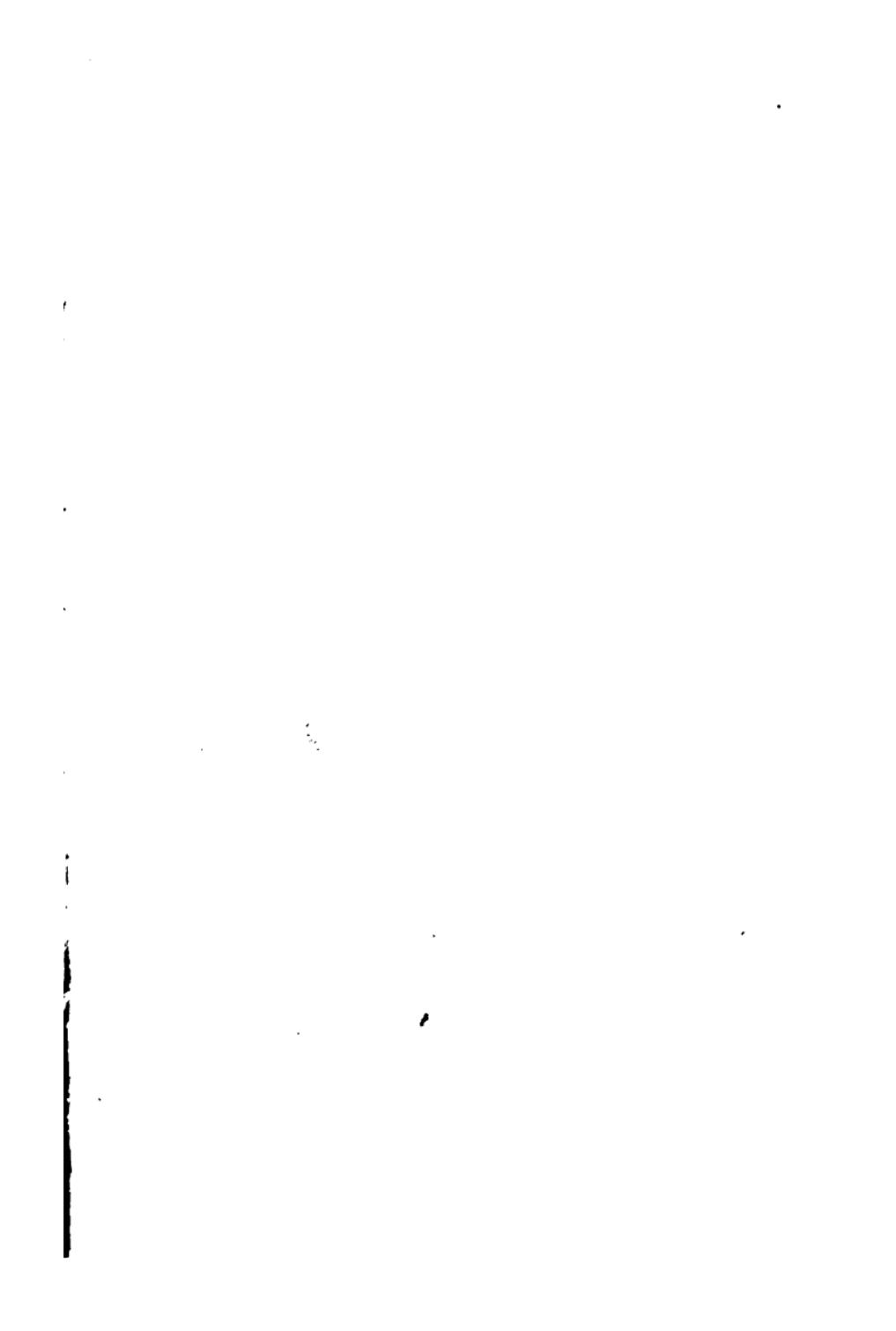
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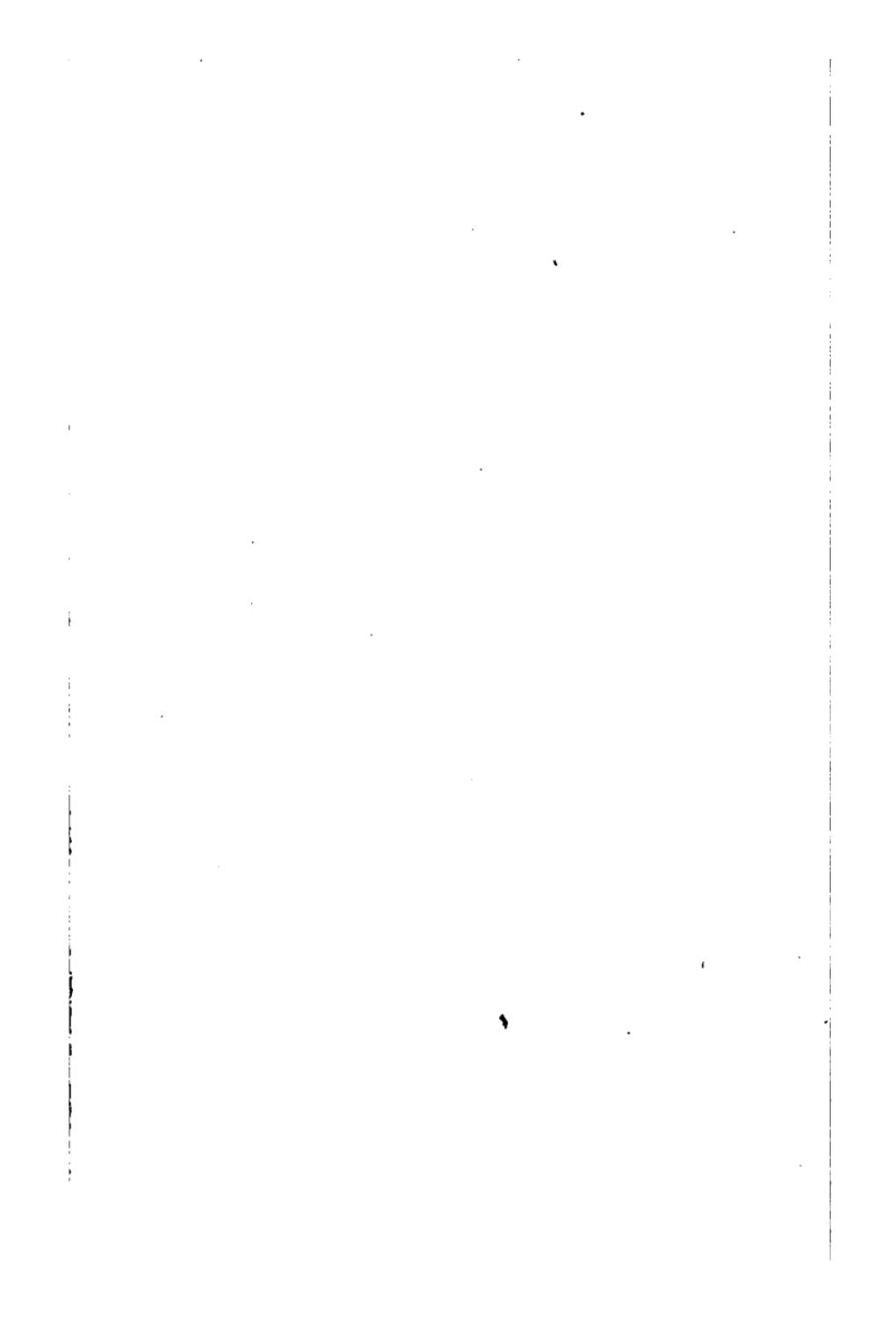
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AN ADDRESS

TO THE

MEMBERS

OF THE

ABINGDON

FAT CATTLE SHOW,

BY THE

REV. HERBERT RANDOLPH, M.A.,

Vicar of Marcham, Berke-



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MDCCLIII.



A D D R E S S.

WE are the experienced and practical cultivators of the land wherein we dwell and trade; we are employed in improving the product of the earth by manual industry; breaking up the ground, we make use of the plough, which does its work best, which is most economical in use, and which requires the least exertion of the young and handsome horses of the Suffolk Punch breed, which are so well trained, and have such excellent treatment from the industrious and skilful ploughman. The fruitful furrows, and the raised high warm ridges of the stiff land are cut with the ploughshare, the miry clods of earth which are cast up from the plough are broken, the crumbling clods are smoothed with harrows, pounded with rakes, and crushed with rollers to receive the seed corn, which is annually changed from the growth of a soil of a different quality, which in the autumn, with the drilling machine is cast into well prepared ground.

Occupied in breeding horses, in breeding and fattening cattle, sheep, swine, and poultry; in this productive season of the year so many oxen, young bullocks, fat cows and heifers, sheep, hogs, and porkers are slaughtered by the butcher, that the supply of all kinds of meat is so abundant that it can be sold at a remunerating price to the grazier, and can be purchased at a moderate one by the consumer. Much food is in the tillage of the poor; a mild and generous master, who looks after his cattle and flocks, is sure to be served by industrious and faithful servants, for whom he finds regular and constant employment, in thrashing, ploughing, drilling, harrowing, carrying lime and manure, and in exterminating the weeds which spring up in the luxuriant soil.

At the proper season of year we contemplate the creation in its beauty, we behold the brightness of the sun, the clearness of the sky, the verdure of the earth, well watered pastures clothed with flocks, valleys covered with corn, and woods resounding with music of birds, and by contemplating the beauties of nature, we are led with suitable returns of gratitude and thankfulness to our Creator, the great Author of nature. On the Lord of life we depend for bread, which cometh out of the earth,

which is the principal support of life, the food which is made of corn, ground into flour either by the wind mill, the water mill, or the hand mill, and dressed into fine meal, which is needed into dough, and baked in the oven. Taught to break the clods of earth, and cast in the wheat and the barley, and all other kinds of grain, we gather the sheaves in our bosom, and reap the corn with our arm; we make use of the thrashing machine which thoroughly separates the corn from the straw, a machine which will produce from reaped wheat corn of good quality, at the average of five quarters per hour, a machine which does it work to the entire satisfaction of the husbandman.

Taught to keep cattle from our youth, we practise the methods of frugality and profit, not moved from our settled faith in God and His providence, we depend on His power and overruling providence, from which comes all the good which we have or are capable of; to Him we pray for whatsoever we stand in need of, and beseech Him to bless all our honest labours with success in the most useful pursuits of agriculture. His mercies, His favours, His blessings, will not descend upon the head of idleness, "the hand of the diligent maketh rich;" aversion from labour is a great sin, and the cause of

many more, which bring men to ruin, and to quickly root them out of the earth ; but God regards the prayers, and provides for the wants of the humble and the faithful, the industrious and the obedient.

When we reap in harvest, we plough in hope, and sow our seed in the ground for another, which only provided we take good heed diligently to cultivate the land, will bless with a large increase our industry, our business habits, or prudent foresight, not only for our comfort and welfare, but for that of our fellow countrymen. We give up our mind to make furrows, we are diligent to give the kine fodder ; He, who feeds the young ravens that call upon Him, multiplies also exceedingly by the produce of the earth ; He who is merciful to us, will bring home our seed, and gather it into our barn ; He, who can give the rain when He pleases, maketh the earth fat, and rich, and fruitful, with His gracious showers, which He hath so abundantly distributed to us. He is the gracious Benefactor of all the earth, the blessed Giver of all good things, who makes the plant to grow and the seed to flourish ; He, who giveth the best and richest food for our bodily refreshment, is blessed for evermore.

The only demonstration of a true and thankful

heart to God, is the making a pious and honest use of all those things which we daily receive from Him ; we, who receive help and blessing from heaven, receive the daily and numerous blessings of a bountiful Donor, to whom we give thanks for His marvellous works, for the increase and abundance of the fruits upon the face of the earth. With pure hearts and minds, under blessing and protection of His Holy Spirit, guiding our whole lives by His discretion, occupied in our business of cultivating and improving the land ; we humbly and fervently beseech the great King of all the earth, who is our greatest and supreme Benefactor, to send health, prosperity, peace, joy, and provision of victuals into our dwellings.

We till our ground in peace, and things prosper well in our hands. The Giver of all we have in possession is the sum and end of all we hope for. He gives us temperate air and gentle showers, and refreshing dews, and plenty of fruits for the use of man and every creature, and good success in all things we take in hand. He is the only giver of all things. It is our constant delight and practise to study the volume of nature with profit, and every line in that book manifestly tends to our instruction. The very smallest, and in

common esteem the most despicable creature represents to us; as in glass, the goodness of God to us. Out of His great goodness He prepareth bread for us in abundance, He fills our barns, and our ricks with a plenty of hay, and with a great quantity of all kinds of grain of excellent quality. The great and holy name of the bountiful Giver, and the gracious Preserver of the fruits of the earth, we all with one accord extol and magnify. We have a helper from heaven, He mercifully defends them from all the casualties and mischiefs to which they are liable, both in the field and in the barn, from being scorched and pined away with drought, corrupted with blasting and mildew, devoured by caterpillars and other numerous creatures.

He who can shew mercy to the widows, and do good to the fatherless, blesses those who help the poor, who provide for the needy, He keeps covenant and mercy with the upright in heart, He is perfect in knowledge, He grants us life and favour, fat oxen and choice sheep, and all kinds of fowl and fish, houses full of goods, and fruit trees in great abundance; our bull gendereth, our cow calveth; He causeth us to reap our corn in the fields, and he warms us with the fleece of His wool.

He who made the heavens and the earth, and the fields, and the highest part of the dust of the world, allows us to follow our industrious and honourable occupation of rural economy, with all diligence and perseverance, and to enjoy His gift of spending our days in prosperity and our years in plenty. We meekly beseech the great Parent of the universe to feed us with food convenient for us, to give us the blessings of health and contentment, to keep us from being fretful and impatient, and to give us comfortable subsistence in the several stations of life, which, in the all-wise government of His providence, He has allotted to us.

He is our Creator and Governor, our Father and our Judge, the heavens declare His glory and the firmament sheweth His handy work, none that put their trust in the God of heaven, who ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, shall be overcome; to all their pious undertakings He gives good success, He gives an heart to serve him, and to do His will with a good courage and with a willing mind, the great God of heaven whom we serve, and fear, and love, we all serve with holy fear, which attends good men through the whole course of their lives, and keeps them always attentive to the motives and consequences of every action. His

positive injunction to all orders and degrees of men, is to honour the Queen, to honour all men, to live in submission to just authority, to use the world provided we do not abuse it, and to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

He solemnly and expressly commands, not to be slothful in business, not to live in laziness and inactivity, to seek our bread in the sweat of our brow. We bless Him that hath made us, that hath breathed into our nostrils the breath of life, that hath endowed us with reason and understanding, and hath replenished us with His good things. He blesses the toil of our hands, He gives us the seasons of the year, the delightful and refreshing fruits of the earth, a blessing not only on man, but on all living creatures that subsist on the earth.

Wise in itself and necessary to the existence of Society, is the ordinance of Providence, that some should be born to wealth, and that others should acquire it by patient and successful industry ; because, by these means, the rich have an opportunity of promoting the Glory of Almighty God, and of forwarding their own salvation by a bountiful use of their money ; while the successful and the industrious serve as animating examples to those around them, to pursue the same course of honest

and active exertion. Food and clothing come from the Lord, who for our sakes maketh pleasant plants to grow, and blesseth the increase of our cattle ; we nevertheless till the ground and tend our flocks and our herds, with as much care as if success depended upon our industry and care ; but every temporal blessing proceeds from His bountiful goodness, to him we owe our being and every thing we have in life, we are never out of the sight and protection of our Maker. A small quantity of seed rewards the sower, by His blessing, with a plentiful increase ; the wise and the good bless God for a sound constitution and perfect health, and He always follows their gratitude with His distinguishing mercies.

We learn by a wise frugality to provide for future need, making a temperate and right use of worldly goods ; we shun the dangerous, the deceitful, the broad road that leadeth to destruction, which those unhappily so rashly and so inconsiderately follow, who only rise to toil and live to pleasure ; who fill their hearts with none but worldly cares, and their thoughts with worldly projects ; who live without the remembrance of God in their minds, or the sense of His mercies and salvation in their bosom, to grow old, perhaps, in

carelessness and then return to dust. Every thinking man makes an enquiry into the constitution and design of his own nature, he contemplates his own frame, he asks how he came to be what he is, for what purpose he was continued, and what is the main business of his life and actions. A little reflection will soon convince him that he received his being from another, to whom, for so valuable a gift as the loan of life, he must surely be accountable ; and that therefore, it is of the utmost consequence that he should prepare himself nightly for the expected account.

Whatever our circumstances are, let us receive them with equanimity and content ; if we are blessed with an abundance of the good things of the world, let us consider them not as our own, but as talents entrusted by the supreme Disposer of all things to our care and management ; if we are in a state of indigence and necessity, let us bear it patiently and submissively, without murmuring and repining ; learning in whatsoever state we are in, therewith to be content.

He that ministereth seed to the sower, enriches us in every thing according to all bountifulness, and rewards with success the honest labours of the husbandman. His earth serves us, His cloud

showers plenty upon us, His common benefits which we all enjoy, deserve the thanksgiving of a whole life. His natural benefits which we partake of, are the air we breathe, the sun that shines upon us, the water, and the earth which so faithfully serve us ; all our circumstances we leave with trust and hope to the care of heaven, remarking the hand of that gracious Providence, who aims at no end but the happiness of those He blesses, and who desires no return from them but an upright and thankful heart. His grace is the seed we cultivate ; His hand alone directs us to do His will, and the same blessed hand restrains us from ill ; for all the favours which we all receive from the God of nature and reason, the God also of grace and religion, He seeks no other praise than our treading in the happy steps of piety and virtue, to arrive at His glory.

When the harvest sun provides a cloud, and seems to rest his wearied beams, he seeks not to save the journey of his light, but only spares the reaper's head, who, after a day of faithful labour in a course of just and pious living, lays down his weary head in the bosom of Providence. The great and glorious God disposes all things in number, weight, and measure. He is the Lord of

things, He knoweth all things, He knows best how to bring good out of evil, the patience of His gracious hand holds His blessings over our heads, still waiting the time we are fit to receive them. The God of all power and might accomplishes the enterprizes of those who serve the God of heaven day and night, to the glory of the faithful, the pious, and the honest ; and to their exaltation, who have diligently sought for, and have found the unsearchable riches of wisdom that worketh all things ; that wisdom which safely conducts her votaries to temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude, who are fully persuaded that it is not the growing of fruits that nourisheth man ; but that it is God's holy word that preserveth them that trust in Him, that plough and sow and gather instruction from their youth, by minding the ordinances of the Lord, by continually waiting for the fruits of wisdom ; they amply provide not only for their present but above all for their future welfare, by their communication in his law.

The God of love and peace giveth grace and mercy, joy and gladness, to them that have virtue, to them that do that which is honest, that which is praise-worthy, and keep his laws ; but He wisely ordains that those who despise wisdom and nurture,

are miserable, and that their hope is vain, their labours unfruitful, and their works unprofitable. For the good are good things created; God's ways are plain to those on whom the light of righteousness shineth, whom He delivereth out of temptations. We go on our way with meekness in our laborious business of husbandry, we have an eye to our cattle which we keep for profit; sowing to the Spirit, we trust not in uncertain riches, but in living God, which giveth us all things richly to enjoy; distinguishing ourselves from the rest of the world, by a bright example of every christian grace and virtue, we rejoice in the success of our labours, thankful for God's mercies, which come down upon us like rain into a fleece of wool; we make mention of His righteousness; we live in goodness and righteousness and truth, having a lively sense of our own weakness—of the divine Majesty, and of our dependence on God, we love His name, and lift up our hearts to him with prayer and praise. His blessing which He daily poureth upon us, covereth the dry land as a river, and watereth it as a flood; having the eyes of our understanding enlightened by the Father of glory, we live according to the truth of the everlasting gospel, having a firm expectation of being blessed with His continued

favour and protection, we live in his faith and fear all our lives long.

In His hand is the prosperity of man, prosperity and adversity, life and death, cometh of the Lord ; loving not this present world, we rejoice in the hope which is laid up for us in heaven, we are the followers of them in whom the word of Christ dwelleth in all wisdom ; justified by His grace, we are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, and walking worthy of God, who hath called us to His kingdom and glory ; we are followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises which are laid up for us in the eternal mansions in heaven, of happiness and glory. In God's holy word which is stedfast for ever, we have a firm assurance, that the promise of the Lord most high to the children of men will not fail, in His tender mercy, in His everlasting truth, in His just judgment in the course of His dealings with the righteous, we daily see that they are comforted and honoured even in the course of this life ; we see that He is their refuge, their strength, and their support, in all the storms of life. He shews unto them the truth of His word, He gives to them that diligently seek Him, the riches of His land ; and they pour out their hearts before Him, not giving up themselves

to vanity, not setting their hearts upon the riches which they have in possession, they seek for and they find the desirable riches of righteousness, and walking in the safe and secure paths of labour and contentment, they meet not with disappointment, but with sure and certain success in their lawful and honest business, and they experience, to their great comfort, the hand of Providence mercifully and constantly stretched forth, to make the land in their occupation not barren, but fruitful. His blessing, His support, His marvellous loving kindness, His mighty protection, is their blessed portion, the reward of their faithful obedience ; a happiness which attends them every moment of their existence, and which brings to them true joy and solid happiness in their weary and laborious passage through the wilderness of life, and their whole life is a tribute of joy and praise for His mercy and goodness towards them, for which they never fail to rejoice with humble gratitude, being deeply sensible that the blessing of His providential care, of His paternal regard, is unbounded and never-failing ; in making their folds full of sheep, and their valleys full of corn, in giving them so many blessings, so many comforts, so many proofs of His tender mercies and care towards them ; to whom from the

rising up of the sun, unto the going down thereof, they continually offer praise and thanksgivings. The only tribute which their heavenly Father will be pleased to accept graciously, is that of a godly, righteous, and sober life, who hath preserved their lives, from their youth up until now, among so many and great dangers, seen and unseen.

Almighty God of His bounteous mercy, freely gives to the industrious and the pious, not only health and prosperity, but He adds the blessing of His invaluable gift of the grace of wisdom. We live in a most fertile part of the country, where we enjoy a good state of health, in a most beautifully situated and a most luxuriant vale, very attractively placed for the lovers of all rural sports, where there is a vast number of superior store and fat cattle, of the Devon, the Hereford, and the short-horned breeds, where the choicest flocks of the Coltswood, the Hampshire, the Leicester, and the Sussex breeds, are under the management of the shepherds with their trusty dogs, who take such great care of them ; we have also several improved breeds of swine, in no other district of our country is the culture, not only of corn, but also of various root crops better attended to, such a superior and excellent system of husbandry, with enterprize and

good management, is so universally practised, in every department of agriculture, that not only those who are engaged in it are amply rewarded, but it is of incalculable benefit to the welfare and prosperity of this great country.

Constantly employed in our trade and vocation, we too well know our own interest, not to suffer the ground to rest untilled ; thankful for the numerous blessings which our peaceful pursuits afford us, we live under the government of our most gracious and beloved Queen, with all her loving subjects in Great Britain and Ireland, and the Colonies—we most cordially unite, in our unshaken attachment, our loyal allegiance, and every affectionate wish, that our Sovereign may long reign over her contented, united, and happy people, under Divine Providence committed to her charge, in the enjoyment of health, and every blessing, together with her Royal Consort, and all the Royal Family, we humbly and devoutly beseech Almighty God, that they, together with us, after this life ended, may all be numbered by the Son of God among the blessed of the Father.

